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ABSTRACT

New Mexico's investigation of competency-based certification has been a natural outgrowth of educational developments and concerns in the state and does not represent participation in a new educational trend just for the sake of being "in." Concern has been expressed by the legislature, lay groups, and the State Department of Education that current methods of teacher evaluation and certification fall short. In 1972, a task force was formed to investigate the concept of competency-based certification. In spite of the great activity in competency-based programs, New Mexico's task force has yet to identify one program on the national scene which is effective. Therefore, the New Mexico task force has operated and will continue to operate with a sense of caution. The task force feels that if a competency-based approach is approved for development in New Mexico, it will have to be approved on the basis of a sound foundation relevant to the specific needs of New Mexico. (The document includes a list of questions the task force feels must be studied in depth, a list of several possible approaches that might provide solutions to the questions, listings of those attending and those invited to task force meetings, and a glossary of terms.) (JA)

ED 099267

INTERIM REPORT

COMPETENCY BASED CERTIFICATION

JANUARY 1, 1973

ACTION IN NEW MEXICO

TASK FORCE
COMPETENCY BASED CERTIFICATION

NEW MEXICO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SP 008 672

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COMPETENCY BASED CERTIFICATION:
The Action in New Mexico

Competency based education and competency based certification are concepts sweeping the nation today. Approaches to these concepts in fact have in some areas reached the stage of faddism in which educators are working on new approaches to the concepts not with an eye to improving education for children, but, rather, for the sake of being "in".

In New Mexico, however, investigation of competency based certification has been a natural outgrowth of educational developments and concerns in the state during recent years. These developments have come in the areas of educational finance, accountability, evaluation, and research on the correlations between teacher education and student achievement, among others.

More directly, one of the objectives developed for state education by State Superintendent Leonard J. De Layo calls for interdependent and parallel methods of evaluation, accreditation and certification. Furthermore, evaluation of student achievement and program effectiveness in New Mexico schools has evolved into a program of criterion referenced evaluation. Both lead logically to development of some form of competency based teacher certification.

These items, along with education concerns expressed statewide by teacher organizations, lay groups and the legislature regarding teacher effectiveness and program validity have pointed to competency based approaches. It is generally felt that under the current method of teacher evaluation, competency is not being established. A new method must be developed which is just. That is, just for the teachers, for the administrators, for the state and particularly for the school children of New Mexico.

Concern has been expressed by the legislature, lay groups and the State Department of Education that current methods of teacher evaluation and certification fall short of the ideal. Under the traditional system, there is no real method of determining whether a teacher actually is effective in the classroom.

For instance, during the past ten years, the State Board of Education has heard some 22 appeals from tenure teachers dismissed from their jobs by local education agencies. Although a majority of these dismissals ostensibly have been for incompetency, records of the appeals in almost all cases fail to substantiate incompetency.

Teachers are concerned about this. They also are concerned that some just and effective method be developed to enable the state or the local school administration to accurately measure the effectiveness of a teacher. They also are concerned that some method be developed which will enable them to know exactly what is expected of them in the classroom and in their professional, community and personal relations and activities.

With these concerns in mind, State Superintendent De Layo in late 1972 appointed a three-member task force composed of staff members, Phil Barck, Helen Westcott and Jim Pierce, from the State Department of Education to investigate the concept of competency based certification. He charged the task force with investigating the feasibility of such an approach and with making recommendations to the State Board of Education on possible directions and action. The state department of education has committed itself to designing a competency based certification re-certification plan for 1975.

The task force began work immediately gathering materials on competency based education and certification. Reports, models, bibliographies, newsletters, books and personal letters were gathered from all areas of the United States. All the materials were analyzed by the task force. In addition, the task force sponsored three meetings, one in September and two in October, to solicit comments from experts in the field of competency based education regarding their programs, their ideas and their concerns. These meetings were attended by representatives from institutions of higher learning, local school administrations, teacher organizations and other interested groups by invitation of the task force. (See Appendix A for listing of those invited and those attending.)

Then, during a regular meeting of the State Board of Education in late October, the task force recommended that the board authorize continued study of the concept. Members of the task force told the board that more questions than solutions had been uncovered by the investigation and more time was needed to investigate every possible method before firm recommendations could be made.

At the same time, the task force stressed that New Mexico <u>would</u> <u>not</u> become involved in competency based certification simply because it was the national education fad of the year. The three members emphasized that no action would be taken by them until such time as adequate and thorough studies had been made and valid, relevant foundations were developed which could lead to a competency based approach which would best serve education in New Mexico.

The State Board of Education authorized further study of the concept, and the task force today continues its investigation, seeking solutions and possible answers to the myriad of questions which have appeared during the course of this study.

To date, the findings have shown that competency based education is attracting a great deal of attention nationally.

In a recent statement, Ewald B. Nyquist, commissioner of education of the state of New York, said, "I have stated for several years that future certification should depend on performance over a period of time, with tenure not granted until that performance is adjudged to be competent With this statement, Nyquist sums up the general national trend of thought.

Over the past decade, more federal attention has been focused on performance or competency based certification. Elementary education models have been developed, the Teacher Corps has directed its entire program toward competency, Task Force 72 focused on the approach as a major issue and several national conferences devoted to the subject have been held.

A total of 13 states now are actively working on new certification standards and approaches using competency as a base. New Mexico's neighboring states of Arizona and Texas are two of these states. Arizona is developing an experimental model for competency based certification, while Texas is under mandate from the state legislature to be fully operational under a competency based system within the next five years. Six other states have legislative or administrative support for development of approaches based on competency and performance.

Furthermore, the Association of American Colleges for Teacher Education has placed top priority on the concept, while seven institutions of higher learning have established and are operating under total competency based programs. Eleven other universities have competency programs as an alternative to traditional programs, and two local school districts in Florida and Texas are operating under competency based systems.

A flurry of articles, reports, dissertations, theses and books have been published on the subject in recent years, and catalogs of teacher competencies, program models and bibliographies have been placed on the market or are about to be placed on the market.

With all this activity, however, New Mexico's task force has yet to identify one program on the national scene which is effective. Some elements of programs have been determined effective and some good models have been developed, but there is no total program existing presently

which is functioning as had been anticipated. In fact, it generally can be said that even with all the study and development, there still are more questions remaining to be answered than there are answers and solutions.

Therefore, the New Mexico task force has operated and will continue to operate with a sense of caution. The task force feels that if a competency based approach is approved for development in New Mexico, it will have to be approved on the basis of a sound foundation relevant to the specific needs of New Mexico. The task force does not want to see New Mexico repeat mistakes made by other states, by universities or by school districts in other parts of the nation.

Study of the concept to date has pointed out a number of questions in New Mexico which the task force feels must be studied indepth and from all possible points of view. Those major questions are as follows:

-- How will competency and its components be defined, and will these definitions consider competencies according to grade level and will they consider the varying degrees of competency exhibited?

-- What will the effect of competency based certification be on the reciprocity of certificates? If a system of competency based certification were developed for New Mexico, would certificates issued in this state continue to be accepted by other states as they are at present?

-- What will be the frequency of certification, and will the state continue to issue life certificates and professional licensures? In other words, will teachers be recertified at five year, two year or ten year intervals? Will New Mexico continue to honor life certificates of teachers, and will the state continue to issue professional licensures to persons teaching in their professional fields?

-- Should competency definitions and descriptions be developed for students in universities, for teachers in the public schools or for both groups? In other words, should the competency concept be applied to both preservice and inservice teachers?

-- What will be the implications for teacher recruitment if a competency based system is developed?

-- How would a competency based certification plan be implemented? Should implementation be brought about statewide, by district, by school building or by classroom?

-- What would be the legal, statutory and economic effects of competency based certification on the department of education and the local schools?

-- What effect would competency based certification have on the teaching profession in New Mexico?

-- What would the criteria be for a competency based system, and who would evaluate the competency of teachers under this system?

-- What would be the controlling variables?

-- Who would furnish models and information on the system if it were developed?

-- What would be the political implications of a competency based certification system statewide, by district, by community and by school building unit?

It is the feeling that these major questions, along with a number of lesser questions, must be satisfactorily answered before any competency based certification system could be uniformly applied in New Mexico. Solutions to these questions and others could be found through several alternative approaches. These include the following:

-- Allow special funding to local schools or school districts wishing to develop pilot or model competency based certification systems. These pilot projects would be carefully controlled so the schools and/or districts approved for special funding would exhibit a wide range of variables. In this way, models developed could be applied to a variety of local situations in the event that the models were adopted for general application statewide. The controls also should require that preplanning and implementation activities involve close monitoring and evaluation of the pilot project at all stages by the department of education.

-- Contract with universities in the state for development of a comprehensive statewide competency based certification model. The contract would require a broad base input from universities, teachers, local boards and administrations, lay groups, students, the state department of education and pertinent legislative committees. Controls also would require periodic monitoring and review of the model as developed, and should require that the model be tested in select school districts and revised if necessary before final adoption and implementation would be considered.

-- The State Board of Education requires that the department of education develop a uniform statewide model following the same procedures as outlined above.

-- Allow competency based certification systems to be developed independently and individually by local school districts with the department of education making the final decision on recertification based on its evaluation of each individual system originating at the local level.

-- Allow any combination of the above alternatives.

-- Continue paper study of the concept and propose adoption and revision of existing models as utilized in other states.

The task force feels that adoption of any of the above alternatives could provide an adequate basis for solution of the major questions and concerns raised about competency based certification in New Mexico, particularly if the processes adopted were thoroughly monitored and evaluated and providing adequate dialogue was provided for among the various groups involved.

However, the task force believes that some definite action should be taken at the earliest possible time. Some alternative study project must be undertaken with certain foundations agreed upon by all involved, since no sould solutions to the questions raised can be found

without the benefit of concrete experience and data pertinent to New Mexico.

By June, 1973, after the task force completes further study of this concept, a proposal similar to that outlined above should be made to the State Board of Education and approval sought for implementation of one or more of the alternatives as outlined. Thus, data derived from actual experience in New Mexico can be gathered and logical, sound programs can be developed for the future.

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APPENDIX A.

Comparative Listings of Those Invited and Those Attending Task Force Meetings

Table I. September 22, 1972, Meeting, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Those Invited

Ron Coss, Legislative School Study Committee
Mrs. Donna McCord, Legislative Finance Committee
Edmund A. Gaussoin, NEA - New Mexico
Joe Menapace, New Mexico School Boards Association
Don Stuart, Board of Educational Finance
Mrs. Lois Collins, New Mexico Classroom Teachers' Association
Earl Nunn, New Mexico School Administrators Association
Richard Lawrence, University of New Mexico
Hendrik C. deBruin, Eastern New Mexico University
Wiley Pweples, Western New Mexico University
R. Eric Larson, College of Santa Fe
Carey O'Bryan, University of Albuquerque
Jack O. L. Saunders, New Mexico State University
Robert Cormack, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
Eugene E. Hughes, College of the Southwest
A. A. Valencia, New Mexico Highlands University
President, Albuquerque Teachers' Federation
President, New Mexico PTA
Dan McKinnon, Albuquerque Public Schools Board Member

Those Attending

Mrs. Lois Collins, New Mexico Classroom Teachers' Association
Rudy B. Miller, Albuquerque Teachers' Federation
Howard W. Jessee, Albuquerque Teachers' Federation
Carey O'Bryan, University of Albuquerque
Don Stuart, Board of Educational Finance
Weldon Perrin, Department of Education
Robert Cormack, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
Hendrik C. deBruin, Eastern New Mexico University
Richard Lawrence, University of New Mexico
Jack O. L. Saunders, New Mexico State University
Mary Alice Sipes, NEA - New Mexico
Wiley E. Pweples, Western New Mexico University
R. Eric Larson, College of Santa Fe
Darwin Crockett, College of the Southwest
Howard B. Melton, Eastern New Mexico University
Joe Menapace, New Mexico School Boards Association
Ron Coss, Legislative School Study Committee
John E. Stablein, Las Cruces Schools
Jerald Reece, New Mexico State University
Bert Jones, Albuquerque Public Schools
Tom Clark, Albuquerque Public Schools
A. A. Valencia, New Mexico Highlands University
Marshall E. Farris, Albuquerque Classroom Teachers' Association

Table II. October 18, 1972, Meeting, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Those Invited

Ron Coss, Legislative School Study Committee
Mrs. Donna McCord, Legislative Finance Committee
Edmund A. Gaussoin, NEA - New Mexico
Don Stuart, Board of Educational Finance
Joe Menapace, New Mexico School Boards Association
Mrs. Lois Collins, New Mexico Classroom Teachers' Association
Earl Nunn, New Mexico School Administrators Association
Richard Lawrence, University of New Mexico
Hendrik C. DeBruin, Eastern New Mexico University
Wiley Pweples, Western New Mexico University
R. Eric Larson, College of Santa Fe
Carey O'Bryan, University of Albuquerque
Jack O. L. Saunders, New Mexico State University
Robert Cormack, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
Eugene E. Hughes, College of the Southwest
A. A. Valencia, New Mexico Highlands University
President, Albuquerque Teachers' Federation
President, New Mexico PTA
Dan McKinnon, Albuquerque Public Schools Board Member
Marshall E. Farris, Albuquerque Classroom Teachers' Association
I. V. Payne, Eastern New Mexico University
Mildred Fitzpatrick, Albuquerque
Frankie McCarty, Albuquerque Journal
Fred Comstock, New Mexico State Board of Education

Those Attending

Jerry Reece, New Mexico State University
Richard Lawrence, University of New Mexico
Jack O. L. Saunders, New Mexico State University
I. V. Payne, Eastern New Mexico University
Carey O'Bryan, University of Albuquerque
Mildred Fitzpatrick, Albuquerque
Leonard J. De Layo, State Superintendent
Weldon Perrin, State Department of Education
Tom Clark, Albuquerque Public Schools
Lois E. Collins, New Mexico Classroom Teachers' Association
Lydia Wright, Albuquerque Classroom Teachers' Association
E. A. Gaussoin, NEA - New Mexico
Helen Harriger, NEA - New Mexico
Wiley E. Pweples, Western New Mexico Lniversity
A. A. Valencia, New Mexico Highlands University
Howard B. Melton, Eastern New Mexico University

Table III. October 27, 1972, Meeting, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Those Invited

Ron Coss, Legislative School Study Committee
Mrs. Donna McCord, Legislative Finance Committee
Edmund A. Gaussoin, NEA - New Mexico
Don Stuart, Board of Educational Finance
Joe Menapace, New Mexico School Boards Association
Mrs. Lois Collins, New Mexico Classroom Teachers' Association
Earl Nunn, New Mexico School Administrators Association
Richard Lawrence, University of New Mexico
Hendrik C. deBruin, Eastern New Mexico University
Wiley Pweples, Western New Mexico University
R. Eric Larson, College of Santa Fe
Carey O'Bryan, University of Albuquerque
Jack O. L. Saunders, New Mexico State University
Robert Cormack, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
Eugene E. Hughes, College of the Southwest
A. A. Valencia, New Mexico Highlands University
President, Albuquerque Teachers' Federation
President, New Mexico PTA
Dan McKinnon, Albuquerque Public Schools Board Member
Marshall E. Farris, Albuquerque Classroom Teachers' Association
I. V. Payne, Eastern New Mexico University
Mildred Fitzpatrick, Albuquerque
Frankie McCarty, Albuquerque Journal
Fred Comstock, New Mexico State Board of Education

Those Attending

Don Ferguson, New Mexico State University
Jack O. L. Saunders, New Mexico State University
B. Eugene Koskey, University of Albuquerque
Jerry Reece, New Mexico State University
Wiley E. Pweples, Western New Mexico University
Marshall Farris, Albuquerque Classroom Teachers' Association
Carey O'Bryan, University of Albuquerque
Dick Lawrence, University of New Mexico
Don Stuart, Board of Educational Finance
Hendrik C. deBruin, Eastern New Mexico University
Howard B. Melton, Eastern New Mexico University
Lois Collins, New Mexico Classroom Teachers' Association
Mildred Fitzpatrick, Albuquerque
E. A. Gaussoin, NEA - New Mexico
John E. Stablein, Las Cruces Public Schools
Richard L. Johnson, Legislative School Study Committee
Earl Nunn, New Mexico School Administrators Association
E.J.C. Hambliss, New Mexico State University

APPENDIX B.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
(Adopted from a Glossary as Utilized by the State of New Jersey)

1. Accountability: To whom, for what, and in what manner a teacher shall be answerable for his actions.

2. Competence : A general term referring to the totality of a teacher's ability to fulfill his responsibilities.

3. Competency: The capability of a teacher to perform a given task.

4. Competency Based Certification: Issuance of a license which is based on the capability to perform a given task.

5. Initial Certification: The first, regular, standard certificate issued to a teacher.

6. Instructional Objective: What a student should do after instruction that he could not do before.

7. Performance Certification: Issuance of a license for teaching which is based on an individual's demonstrated competence.

8. Performance Contracting: A system in which a teacher is rewarded for students' achievement according to a predetermined standard.

9. Performance Criteria: Predetermined standards against which a teacher demonstrates his competence.

10. Performance Objective: A behavioral goal, based on performance criteria, which a teacher should achieve.

11. Task Force: A committee of educators investigating the feasibility of developing competency based certification in New Mexico.